



Directorate of
Intelligence

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Afghanistan Situation Report

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7 May 1985

NGA Review Completed

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NESA M 85-10092JX

7 May 1985

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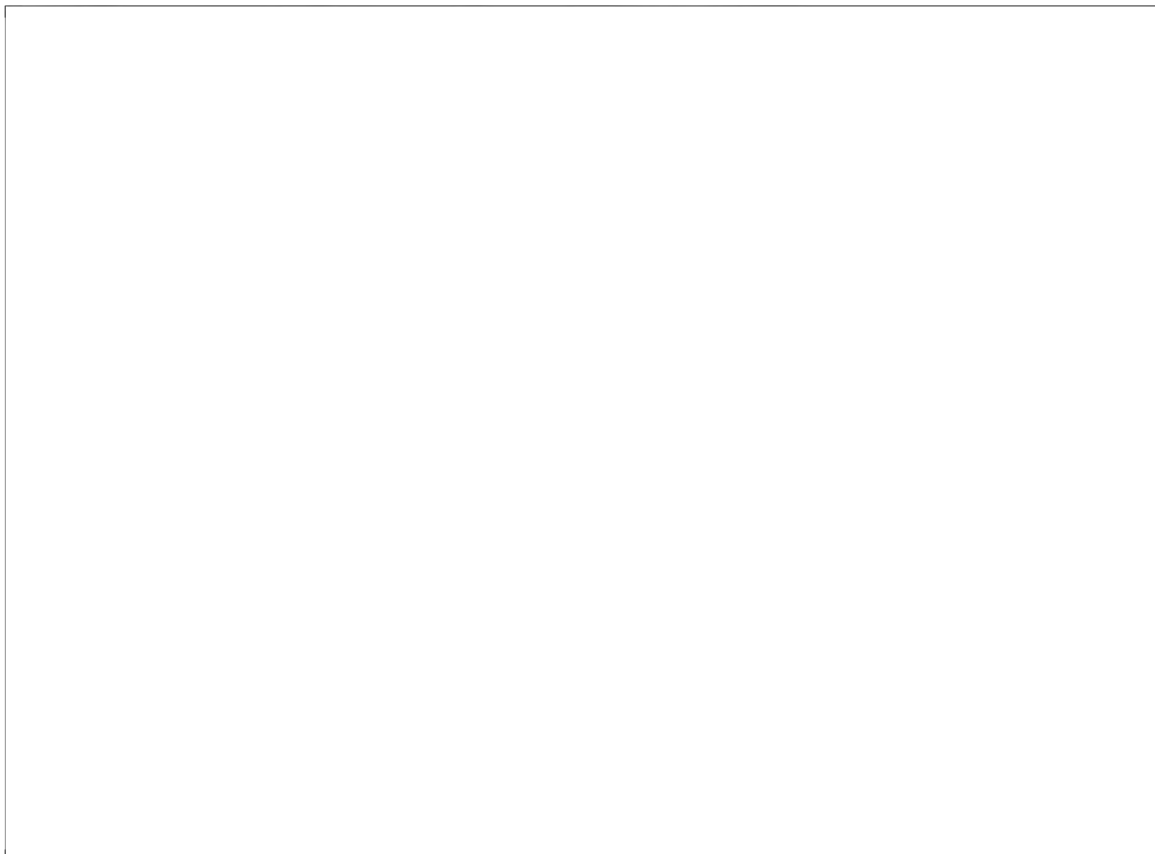
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SOVIETS TALK TOUGH

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[redacted] at a meeting of the Dartmouth Conference in mid-April [redacted] the Soviets seemed intent on warning that continued Pakistani support for the resistance might prompt the Afghan regime to take defensive actions on its own in Pakistan against the insurgents. The Soviets added that Moscow would not interfere. The Soviets said they were mindful of the impact such an attack might have on Soviet relations with China and the US. [redacted]

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Comment: The Soviets rarely raise the Afghan issue with the US officially lest they convey an impression of their vulnerability on the issue. The Soviets probably believe their message will get through because many of the participants in this unofficial forum are former US government employees. Moscow's claim that the Afghans may take action suggests that any ground

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raids into Pakistan will be portrayed as purely Afghan moves. The death of Soviet prisoners of war at a refugee camp in Pakistan in late April, or a similar incident, could provide the pretext for such a raid.

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IN BRIEF

-- [redacted] during the Saur revolution anniversary parade in Kabul on 27 April a bomb dropped from the window of a building--probably by guerrillas--killed 6 and injured about 100 people. An explosion behind Babrak Karmal's reviewing stand caused no casualties. [redacted]

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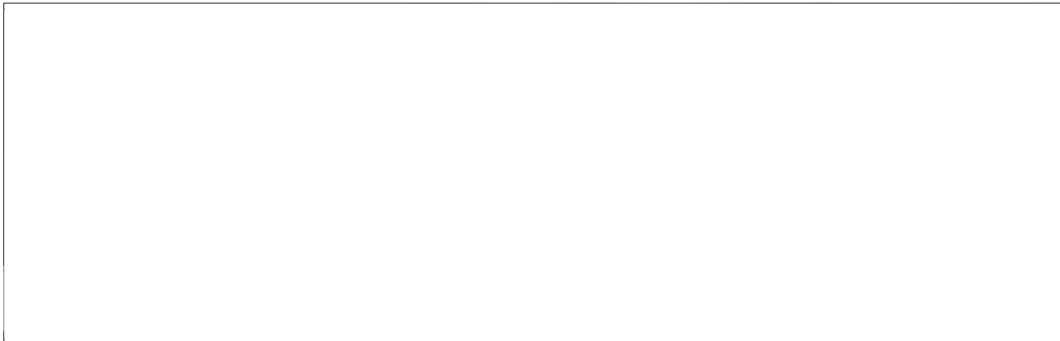
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Early May Babrak Karmal departs for Moscow; will arrive in Poland on 16 May for an official visit.

21 May Ramadan begins.

30 May Anniversary of Afghanistan's independence from Great Britain, achieved in 1919.

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHANISTAN: PRELIMINARY 1985 GRAIN OUTLOOK
by [REDACTED] OGI [REDACTED]

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Widespread rains since late March have replenished Afghanistan's critically low irrigation supplies, averting a major crop disaster. As a result of the rainfall, we believe that there are now sufficient amounts of water to sustain winter wheat--Afghanistan's principal food grain--until harvest. Prospects for the summer crops such as corn, rice, and cotton are less promising, however, because the mountain snowpack--the main source of water for these crops--is smaller than normal this year. [REDACTED]

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Background

Afghanistan produces some 85 percent of its food and industrial crops on irrigated land. Water for the irrigation system comes primarily from the snow-fed rivers flowing out of the central mountain region, and is augmented by spring rains. Because little rainfall occurs after April, the rivers depend on snow melt to maintain their flow during the late spring and summer, when the demand for water is high. As a result, snow accumulation during the winter is an important factor determining crop production, especially summer crops, in Afghanistan. [REDACTED]

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Equally vital to Kabul's crop output is the proper functioning of the country's fragile irrigation network. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Irrigation of crops was observed in every active agricultural area imaged, providing evidence that normal spring repair of the water diversion dams (weirs), canals, and ancient underground water tunnels (karezes) occurred on schedule this year. In the provinces bordering Pakistan and Iran where intense fighting has occurred, large numbers of farms have been abandoned and the irrigation system is not functioning. [REDACTED]

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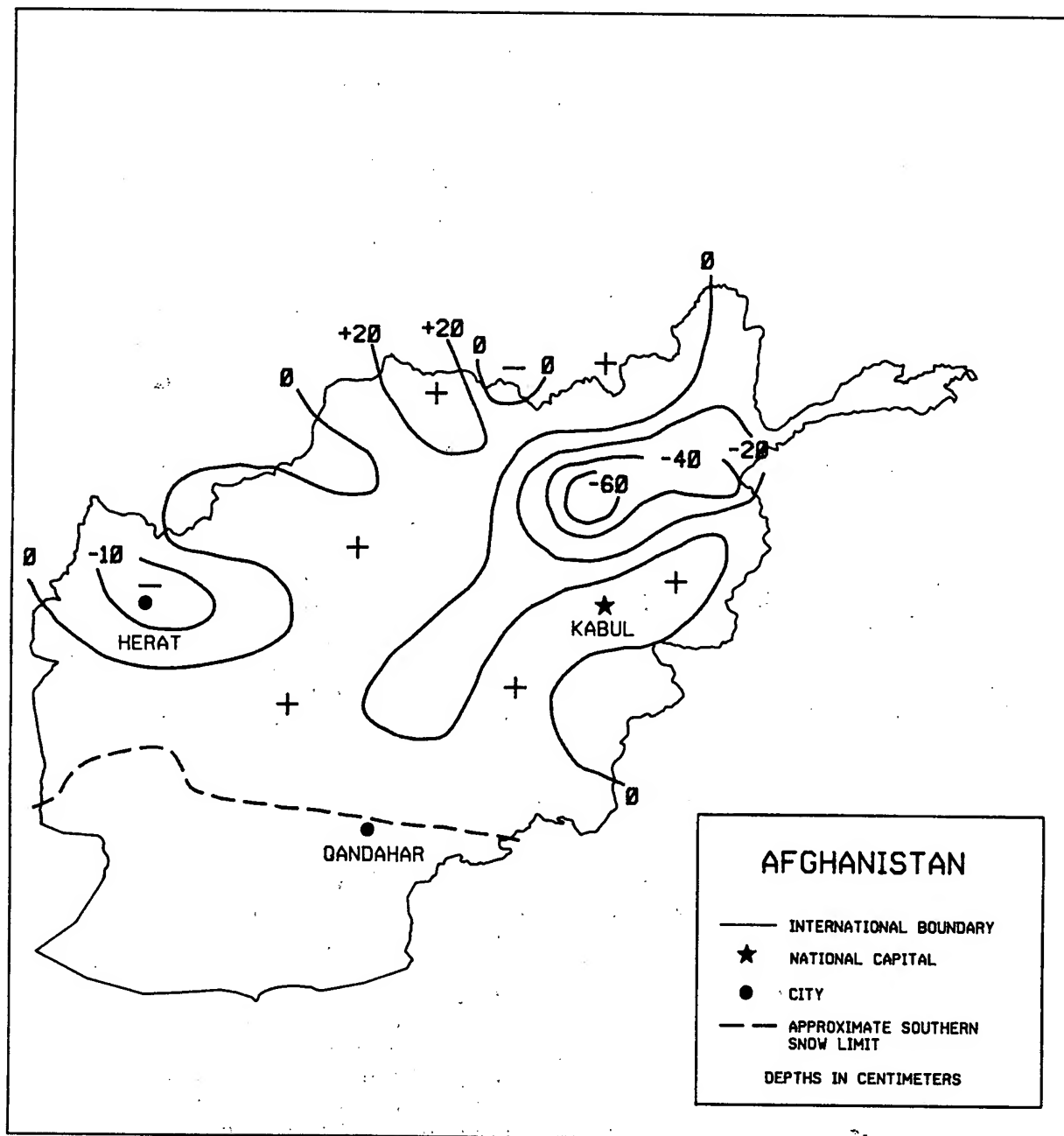
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AFGHANISTAN: SNOW DEPTH, MID-MARCH TO MID-APRIL 1985 COMPARED TO 1984



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1985 Weather Summary

Analysis of meteorological data--although generally sparse and incomplete--indicates that average snow depth in Afghanistan during the mid-March to mid-April period was as much as 40 percent less than in 1984. Snow depths in 1984 also were below normal. The smaller snowpack coupled with generally dry weather during March caused irrigation supplies to reach critically low levels by late March. This problem was remedied, however, by widespread, abundant rainfall from 29 March to 13 April. Some areas received as much or more rain during this period than their yearly average, according to Afghan weather reports. In

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[redacted] river flows are now good to excellent and that irrigation canals are full. [redacted]

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Preliminary Outlook for the 1985 Grain Crop

Although it is still too early in the crop season to estimate 1985 grain production quantitatively in Afghanistan, the recent rains precluded a major harvest disaster. We believe that the irrigated winter wheat crop--about 80 percent of total wheat output--now has enough water to survive until harvesting begins in late May. The dryland winter wheat crop, grown in the northern plains region, also benefitted from the rainfall. [redacted]

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The outlook for Afghanistan's summer crops--mainly corn, rice, and cotton--is less favorable. Because of the smaller than normal mountain snowpack, we expect many of the country's rivers and streams to run dry before these crops mature. The resulting shortage of irrigation water will reduce grain yields and may prompt farmers to cut back on planted area as well. The magnitude of crop damage will depend on what stage of growth the plants are in when irrigation supplies are depleted. Crops are most vulnerable to moisture stress during flowering--the stage when maximum potential yields are determined. [redacted]

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